

THE
AMERICAN CLERGYMAN.

DRAMA, IN SIX ACTS.

including

THREE EFFECTUAL TABLEAUX.

A TOUGHING PICTURE OF LIFE,

moral and instructive in character.

By **FRANK DANZ, Sr.**

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SAINT PAUL, MINN.

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CAST :

Mr. James Hackett, a well-to-do wholesale druggist in New York City. 40 years of age.

Mrs. Florence Hackett, his noble and faithful wife, 35 years of age.

May Hackett, daughter of James and Florence Hackett; a girl 8 years of age.

Two Girls, school-mates of May: 8 and 10 years of age, respectively.

Honest John, the clerk of Mr. Hackett: a gray-haired man, of Irish descent; 50 years of age.

Rev. Charles Peace, a clergyman and very intimate friend of the Hackett family; 50 years of age.

***Mr. Biddle**, Mr. Hackett's friend, who leads Mr. Hackett to gambling and drinking, and finally turns out to be the main cause of the Hackett family trouble; 42 years of age.

***Trapper**, a high-toned fellow, but of small means; 35 years of age.

Sharkey, a gambling-house keeper, 45 years of age.

Mr. Little, a retail druggist of Providence, R. I.; 53 years of age.

Mr. Randall, a wholesale druggist in New York. 52 years of age.

Dr. Dunsmore, family physician of the Hackett family.

Hattie, a hired girl.

A Newsboy.

Two Policemen.

(The drama plays in New York City, in the year 1860.)

* Not appearing again after 2nd act, may act the part of either Mr. Little, Dr. Dunsmore, Mr. Randall or Sharkey; Mr. Little first appearing at end of 3rd act. Dr. Dunsmore in 4th, and Mr. Randall and Sharkey in 5th act.

SYNOPSIS:-

Honest John, Hackett's clerk, and Dr. Peace, the clergyman, know all about the dangerous movements between Mr. Hackett and his friend, Biddle, but remain silent for fear that they might expose a highly respected family, hoping that things might take a turn for the better, but which finally turn out to the contrary. Mr. Little, of Providence, a retail druggist and intimate friend and also good customer of Hackett, and of whom Hackett afterwards borrows money to the amount of \$5,000 without being able to return the same according to his notes. Mr. Randall, also a wholesale druggist of New York and friend of Hackett, becomes his creditor to the amount of \$5,000 without being able to meet the demands according to promissory notes. Mr. Sharkey, a gambling-house keeper loaning money to Mr. Hackett to the amount of \$3,000, to which Mr. Hackett failed to meet the responsibility. After repeatedly reminding Mr. Hackett of his responsibilities and receiving no satisfactory answer, all his creditors turn on him at once, demanding immediate payment. Although a wealthy man in spite of those debts, Hackett had not nerve enough to bear the onslaught of his creditors: he hurried in confusion to Dr. Peace and related to him the approaching storm; Dr. Peace, not expecting such revelation, was driven to such amazement that he proclaimed Hackett lost. This remark made Hackett crazy: he ran away from home into the country, leaving wife and child. Nothing was heard of him for months. His child, May, became homesick to the father and died. Mrs. Hackett, although a woman in good health and in her best years, broke down more and more till sorrow turned her black hair into a mixed gray color, and only a strong mind and good constitution made it possible for her to survive. Dr. Peace, the noble clergyman, did not rest until he turned the severe Hackett-creditors into the warmest and most liberal friends of the Hackett family. Finally Dr. Peace learned through the newspapers that such and such a man, supposed to be insane, was picked up about Green Bay, Wis., and taken care of by the mayor of that city, had been turned over to a certain physician of said place for treatment, who pronounced the case not dangerous at all, and that he would be cured in a few weeks. On learning such news Dr. Peace was overjoyed; he sends a message to the mayor as to such a man, and he received an answer which fully confirmed him that this was his unfortunate friend Hackett. He got ready to start at once to take Mr. Hackett home and instructed his friend Little to convey the news to Mrs. Hackett to prepare to receive her husband. Dr. Peace started for Green Bay, and in the course of a week he came back with his unfortunate friend Hackett, but not until Mr. Hackett, in the midst of his old friends together with his beloved wife, and most warmly welcomed by all, the dark clouds disappeared and he beheld in reality his old happy home,—all of which was mainly due to the unfiresome and most Christian-like labor of Dr. Peace "The American Clergyman."

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THE AMERICAN CLERGYMAN.

ACT I.

SCENE 1st. New York in 1860. Representation of a wholesale Drug Store on Maiden Lane, New York City.

(The clerk Honest John sitting at his desk, writing. After a few minutes writing he raises his head, and, listening for a while, the clock in the store strikes six.)

Honest John (exclaiming): Six o'clock, and Mr. Hackett has not been in the store all afternoon; customers come in and inquire for Mr. Hackett, and, not finding him in his place of business, they leave the store disappointed. (Coming down from chair, with pen in hand, and motioning with pen.) Now, there was Mr. Little, of Providence, one of our best customers for many years; well, the other day he came in the store, very anxious to see Mr. Hackett, as he had some very important matters to communicate with him. Mr. Little came three times that afternoon. I sent the messenger boy all over town to find Mr. Hackett; but he was nowhere to be found; and, after waiting long enough, Mr. Little told me that he had written to Mr. Hackett previously that he would be down to New York on such and such a day and buy a large stock of goods, because he intended to open another drug store in Providence, and that he could not wait any longer, as circumstances would not permit him to do so. He left the store in disgust and has not put in an appearance since. The other day I was told by the clerk of Mr. Randall, the up-town druggist, that Mr. Little of Providence bought his stock at his place to the amount of three thousand dollars! This is a heavy loss for us—not counting the smaller customers that left us because they are not satisfied with Mr. Hackett's way of doing business of late—so they tell *me*. This must not go on any longer; I must tell Mrs. Hackett about it and set my conscience at rest. (Goes about the store, puts things in order to get ready to go, and, while moving about, gives a heavy sigh, and says:) Oh, such an excellent wife as Mrs. Hackett, and such a lovely daughter as little May Hackett is! (Locks the door and goes off.)

SCENE 2nd. Front Flat closed.

(Hackett, Biddle and a third individual, called Fred Trapper, a high-toned fellow of Philadelphia who understands putting on style at the expense of others. Hackett and Biddle somewhat intoxicated—Hackett more so. It is getting dusky.)

Hackett. Biddle, I tell you I will not go any further, but go—hie—right home to my wife and child. (Staggering about.)

Biddle (takes Hackett by the arm, saying:) Now, Hackett, you promised me to go down to the Astor House with me, and then we go home.

Hackett. Well, then, invite your fri—hie!—friend, and let's go together

Trapper. No, Mr. Biddle, excuse me, *I don't go to any second-class place like the Astor; I'll go to Delmonico with you, just to please you.*

Hackett (to Biddle): What does he say, Biddle? I did not understand.

Biddle. Oh, he said he would not like to go to the Astor; he prefers Delmonico's. You know, Hackett, he is a high-toned fellow, and has plenty of money.

Hackett. He is high-toned? (nodding his head) and has plenty of money, has he?

Biddle. Yes, money is no object to *him*.

Hackett. Yes! Especially when he can get it from *somebody else!*

Biddle. Hush, Hackett! You insult that man.

Hackett. Well, then, how is it that he borrowed fifty dollars from me before we left the liquor store down town? How is this for *high-toned*?

Biddle (looks at Trapper with surprise.)

Trapper (pretends not to hear the conversation and quickly pulls a cigar-case, saying politely:) Gentlemen, will you do me the honor and take a cigar with me? (taking one himself and lighting it.)

Biddle (takes one.)

Hackett (refusing): Excuse me; I don't smoke.

Biddle. Take one, Hackett!

Hackett. No, I never smoked before.

Biddle. Well, you can learn it easy enough; try it, Hackett.

Hackett. No, Biddle, I think I learned enough already while in your company. I am afraid by learning any more I might become an artist, shortly. (Laughing, and staggering off.) Now, Biddle, it is raining, and I have no umbrella; let's go home.

Biddle. Now, Hackett, to Delmonico's, upon the invitation of Mr. Trapper, and then we'll go home; it won't cost you a cent.

Hackett. All right, Biddle; I forgot all about having paid for it in advance. (Laughing again.)

(Trapper makes a sour face; then all go off.)

A Policeman (who overheard the conversation, appears, saying:) Yes, go to Delmonico's and make the dose full to overflowing. Poor Hackett! If you only knew Biddle as well as I do! But (raising and dropping hands) I am a policeman and must keep my mouth shut.

SCENE 3rd. Parlor in 69th Street, near Central Park.

(Mrs. Hackett sitting at the table, reading a book; her daughter May playing her favorite song "Home, Sweet Home" at the piano. Listening to the music for a while, Mrs. Hackett, overcome by emotion, takes her handkerchief to wipe the tears from her eyes.)

Little May Hackett (seeing this, says to her mother:) Why, mama! Are you sleepy? Because you wipe your eyes with your handkerchief. I thought you liked that tune so well; at least you often told me so.

Mrs. H. Oh yes, dear child, I like that song just as much as ever, and I always enjoyed our home until lately. About the last three months I have an uneasy feeling about something which I cannot tell you, my darling. But play on, I will listen.

(May resumes playing again, and while playing gradually falls asleep, laying her head upon the piano. By this time noise and tramping of feet are heard approaching the house.)

Mrs. H. (jumping to her feet and saying to herself:) That *must* be him!

(And walking toward the window, the clock on the mantelpiece strikes eleven. The sound of rough voices and tramping of feet come right up to the house of Mr. Hackett. Mrs. H., somewhat startled by this, opens the window to see who is there, and as she opens,)

Biddle (behind the scenes, cries out in a rather suspicious tone): Mrs. Hackett! Mrs. Hackett! Will you please open the door?

Mrs. H. But who are you?

Biddle (still behind the scenes): I am Mr. Biddle, your friend; your husband is with me. Please open the door; it is raining.

Mrs. H. (now quickly opens the door.)

Biddle and Trapper (hold Mr. Hackett by the arms, dragging him to the inside of the parlor, as he is not able to stand upon his feet on account of excessive drinking.)

Mrs. H. (seeing her husband in this condition, gives a loud shriek, clasps her hands above her head, and, turning the same towards heaven, exclaims:) My God! Has it come to this?

(Then Mrs. H. goes to the kitchen and gets a wash-basin with water and a sponge. While she is gone,)

May (who is at the piano asleep, is aroused by the noise and cry of her mother and the strange men working at her father—especially his face, which is covered with blood—runs frightened out into the street, screaming:) Help! Help! Murder!

Two Policemen (stationed near by, come rushing up to May, asking:) What's the matter?

May (quickly): Oh! For God's sake, come into the house—the loafers kill my father!

(As the policemen enter the house, Mrs. Hackett is washing Hackett's face.)

Hackett (trying to explain matters to his wife while the sponge goes constantly over his face, tries to speak, as follows:) Flo—Flo—Florence, you—you see, we—we went—

(As the policemen see at first sight what the matter is, they go right up to Mrs. Hackett, one of them addressing her in the following way:

Policeman. Mrs. Hackett, we are very sorry if we did intrude; I hope you will excuse us.

Biddle (goes up to the policemen, giving them a short explanation, when the policemen nod their heads and leave the room.)

May (in the meantime getting bewildered, running about the room and hallowing:) Oh, for God's sake! Don't kill my father!

(For quite a while Trapper is trying to keep the girl quiet, which, however, is not achieved before)

Hackett (comes to himself again and with outstretched hands stammers:) Come, my dar—hic—darling, co—come to me; your pa—hic—papa is all right, all—hic— all right. Yes, my darling, come to your papa. (And as the girl approaches him, trembling, he closes her in his arms, kissing her. Finally the girl stops crying, but trembles as if she had been out in the bitter cold for hours.)

(*This picture wants to be most carefully studied and practiced, as it is a good scene if well played.*)

(While this takes place, Mrs. Hackett sits in a chair, her elbow placed on a table and her hand at her forehead, when)

Biddle (addresses her:) Mrs. Hackett, we feel *very* sorry about this unpleasant occurrence this evening; it will be all right to-morrow morning.

Mrs. Hackett (at once leaving her chair, approaches her husband, saying:) Come, James! Go to bed. (And then, turning to the men in the room, addresses them:) Gentlemen, you have been of great service to me this evening, and I am sincerely obliged to you. It is getting late, and I wish you all *good night*.

Biddle and **Trapper** (as they start for home): *Good night, Mrs. Hackett!* (At the door they make a halt, and, offering their services,)

Biddle (says for both:) Mrs. Hackett, if you need any further assistance, we are at your service.

Mrs. H. (somewhat sarcastic): Thank you, gentlemen; you see, I am sober, and will be able to manage affairs all alone for this evening. I wish you a very good night.

Biddle and **Trapper** (turn toward the door, and)

Biddle (goes up to Hackett, shakes hands with him, saying:) Good night, Hack!

Trapper (repeating): Good night, Hack; good night!

(And then they leave the room.)

Mrs. H. (turning to her husband, who is still sitting in a chair): Come, James, you need rest; go to bed. (She then helps him to stand up, he leaning on her shoulder; then she takes the candle from the table—her husband in one arm and the candle in the other hand—and says to May:) Come, darling, we go to bed; your pa is very sick.

(Hackett staggering along, and the child, taking hold of her mother's dress, casts a last look up to her father's face; then, dropping her head as if she felt ashamed, puts one of her fingers in her mouth, and all disappear into the bed-chamber.)

(*Turn gas down slowly as the Hackett family disappear. Slow Music, kept up till off and curtain down.*)

[End of 1st act.]

ACT II.

SCENE 1st A clergyman's studio, with a well-stocked library in one of the corners of the room.

Rev. Dr. Peace (sitting at his table, his head buried in his hand and his elbow resting on a table, exclaiming:) I always thought that this would come to no good. I have met Mr. Hackett for the last three months quite often on the street in company with men of rather doubtful character, and I often thought to inform Mrs. Hackett about this; and then again I thought I'd better not alarm the good lady—things may take a turn for the better. (In an agitated manner, and growing more so as he speaks:) But the scene last night which I witnessed from my window; the call for police, and cry of murder—and by little May Hackett, if my ears did not deceive me—and the rushing of two policemen to Hackett's house. (Dr. Peace gets up from his chair and walks up and down the room in great excitement, saying:) I cannot rest until I know what all that trouble was about. I have known Mr. Hackett for the last ten years, and always had the highest opinion of this man; he has been a constant attendant to our church in company with his wife until three months ago, when I saw him but seldom; but then I thought every man can do as he pleases about that

matter in this world as long as he obeys the law and lives otherwise in peace with his fellow-citizens. But of late I have seen that man in company with men of bad repute, (with enraged voice,) *gamblers!* If I am well informed, such bad company will convert angels into *devils*. (Knocks on table with his fist excitingly at the word "*devil*", and sits down in a chair. Then, pausing for a while and cooling down, he leaves his chair, approaches the window, and, opening it, exclaims:) Mr. Hackett generally passes my house about this time in the morning, but I did not see him this morning; everything seems to be quiet about the house, which alarms me still more.

(At this time Honest John, Hackett's clerk, passes the house of Dr. Peace.)

Dr. Peace (standing near the window and seeing John, says:) Oh, there is John. (Opening the window, he asks:) John, can you come in for a short time? (Shuts the window again, talking to himself as he leaves the window:) Now we shall know more about it.

John (knocking at the door.)

Dr. Peace. Come in!

John (opening the door). Good morning, Dr. Peace.

Dr. P. Good morning, John.—Well, John, how is Mr. Hackett this morning?

John. Dr. Peace, that is the very thing I want to find out myself, because Mr. Hackett never missed to show up at the store by this time in the morning, and *this morning*, (emphasizing,) when he is *absolutely wanted*, he is not there. (Drawing a long breath, and casting a sad look at Dr. Peace, he says:) Oh, Dr. Peace! Things are going very bad of late; I am afraid it will not last much longer in this way.

Dr. P. (in a serious manner, approaching John quickly and putting his hand upon his shoulder): Well, John, go to the house and see whether Mr. Hackett is at home or not, and by *all* means try to find out what that noise and screaming meant about eleven o'clock last night, near Hackett's house. Learn all you can, and when you return, please call and inform me of it. I am very anxious to know the nature of this disturbance. Will you, John?

John. Yes, Dr. Peace, I'll do anything to oblige you.

Dr. P. Thank you, John. Now go quick, learn all you can, and return soon.

John (nodding his head, turns toward the door, opening it and saying:) All right, Doctor! I shall be back soon. (Exit.)

Dr. P. (pacing the room up and down, with his head lowered and much agitated, talks to himself): I must know about this mysterious matter. My duty as a clergyman calls upon me, and in order to be true to my mission, I will pierce the dark clouds (pushing forth his arm) that hang over this family and prevent a stroke of lightning before it is too late, *so help me God!* (stretching both hands towards heaven. He will remain in this position till change of scene.)

(Close front flat, in order to get the Hackett parlor well set, and while this is done,)

SCENE 2nd.

John (appearing in front and center of stage, to himself, with left hand held out open and with the finger of the right hand touching upon part of left hand, according to speech): Now, Dr. Peace wants me to find out all I can, and report to him on my return. (Pausing.) Would it be right on my part to betray the confidence of this family? (Pausing, and holding head upright.) Well, I don't mean to betray

this family, and I never would.—Now, hold on, John, and reflect. There is some kind of a reptile undermining the peace and prosperity of this family—I know that too well. And Dr. Peace knows that better than I do; he only wants to get information in order to proceed to the hiding-place of this reptile and crush it, without losing time—that's what he is up to; he is a clergyman, and bound by his oath to hasten to the rescue of those in distress. Yes, Dr. Peace! I will learn all, and tell you *all*. (Goes off on other side of stage.)

SCENE 3rd. Hackett's parlor on 69th Street, near Central Park.

(Mrs. Hackett sitting at a table, with her elbow upon it and one hand pressed against her forehead; in the other hand she holds a white handkerchief, wiping off the tears from her face occasionally. The clock strikes ten.)

May (sitting opposite her mother on the sofa, and staring at her mother with a sad look; then gets up, walks up to her mother, taking her by the hand which holds the handkerchief, and speaks with a trembling voice:) Oh, dear mama, don't cry. Papa is all right again; he told me so this morning when I asked him how he was; he said he was all right, and he would take us out riding after dinner. (Growing somewhat cheerful.) Shall I play for you, mama? (looking cheerfully up to her mother's face.)

Mrs. H. No, my dear child, not now; I have such a dreadful headache. I did not sleep well last night, my dear child.

May. Oh, I am so sorry, dear mama. (Pausing for a little while.) But *I* slept very good; (with a serious look) but I had such a horrible dream. I dreamt papa had left us—had gone far away to a *strange country*—and Dr. Peace went after him to bring him back. (Pausing a little, and lowering her head and playing with her fingers in her mother's hand, exclaiming in a sad manner:) But I did not see papa any more, mama

Mrs. H. (makes a sudden jerk at the words "Had gone to a strange country," and quickly holds the handkerchief to her eyes.)

May (noticing this movement, quickly and rather cheerfully replies to her mother:) But, mama, this was only a *dream*; I don't believe in dreams.

(At this time a slight noise is heard which comes from the bed room where Hackett is asleep.)

Mrs. H. (raising her head as if listening, to May in a subdued voice:) Hush, child! (Raising her hand.) Your father is asleep; you must not wake him.

Hackett (at this time slowly opening the door of the bed-room and coming out. Several scratches, which he received in falling against the lamp-post the night before, are visible on his face. Pausing at the door as he comes out, and casting a sad-smiling look at his wife.)

May (at the same time seeing him, rushes right up to and embraces him, saying:) Oh, papa! I am so glad to see you.

Hackett (taking the child up in his arms, kissing her and putting her down again; then, walking slowly to his wife, says with a trembling voice:) Dear Florence, will you allow me to take you by the hand?

Mrs. H. (raising her head and looking her husband straight in the face, standing upright:) Yes, James, with all my heart! (Clasping his hand.) When you asked me for the first time in my life to give you my hand, it was in our church before God's altar, and we both swore that we would faithfully go through married life and share sorrow and happiness together, like good Christians; and to-day I renew the

oath before *heaven* and in the presence of *our child*, (holding up her hand,) the tie of married life which should make us cling more faithfully together than ever before.

(May is a few steps apart, staring with amazement at her parents. Hackett, overcome with emotion by the speech of his wife, drops down in a chair and lays his head on a table which stands beside him, and buries his head into his hands.)

May (getting alarmed, screaming): My papa! My papa! (running up and embracing him.)

Mrs. H. (at this moment, becoming good-humored, walks up to her husband, takes hold of his hand and kindly speaks to him;) Come, James, don't feel bad; I am your wife, and ready to make any sacrifice for you, if need be, to re-establish those once happy days. (In a rather cheerful manner;) James, I will make a good cup of coffee for you, and that will do you good; you are somewhat feverish from last night's rain; your clothes were wet all over. Why, James, did you not know? (Pausing a little and looking in his face.)

Hackett (raising his head and taking his wife's hand, looking into her face with a sad smile, exclaims;) Dear, faithful wife, heaven's messenger! I wish to God I could say as much. (Dropping his head.)

Mrs. H. Now, James, will you allow me to get you some coffee?

Hackett (raising his head): Yes, my dear, as you will.

(Mrs. H. goes off to get the coffee.)

May (sitting on the sofa, now approaches her father, and, in looking into his face and seeing some scratches, remarks with surprise:) Why, papa! Did those loafers strike you last night?

Hackett. Why, my darling, what makes you think so?

May (pointing at the spots with her finger): Because you got two sore spots on your face.

Hackett. Well, my darling, you see, last night it was very dark and raining, and I slipped and fell down and hurt myself.

May. But you will be all right again in a few days, and the sores will get well—won't you, papa?

Hackett (in a serious tone): Yes, my darling, these sores outside will soon be well again; but not the one inside. (Sighing heavy, and in a low voice exclaiming;) For *this* wound there is only *one* doctor—(looking towards heaven—) the only one who is able to heal such wounds, no matter how deep the cut might be. (Putting his elbow on his knee and resting his head in his hands.)

May (the last remark being a conundrum to her, pauses for an instant, then quickly replies:) Oh, papa! Tell me where this doctor lives, and I will go and get him for you.

Hackett. No, my dear child, it is too far for you to go, and I would not have you go there just now—it would be too soon for both of us; I want you to stay with me, darling. He will come some day; He generally takes his own time, as He knows his patient's needs best, without being told of it.

May. Why, pa, this must be a good doctor; I am glad you know him so well. Then there is no danger for you, papa?

Hackett (embracing the child and kissing her): Yes, my child, whoever knows *Him* and follows His prescriptions, will not very soon receive such dangerous wounds.

Mrs. H. (at this moment opening the side-door and bringing the coffee): Here, James, I have a good cup of coffee for you; drink it.—

John was here this morning, inquiring for you; he said there were three gentlemen down to the store and very anxious to see you. But you may please yourself about that, James; that is *your* business, not mine.

(Hackett drinks the coffee leisurely, while Mrs. H. is sitting beside him in a chair, holding May with one arm. After Hackett has finished the coffee,)

Mrs. H. (in good humor, says:) Wasn't that a good cup of coffee, James?

Hackett. Oh, yes, Florence! But, my dear, I very near forgot about it: it is time for me to look to my business. I forgot all about John being here inquiring for me. I must get ready to go down to the store. (He goes to work to dress himself, and finally goes to the mirror; looking in, he observes the scratches on his face; he shrinks back and, turning towards his wife, says:) My dear Florence! I am afraid I dare not be seen on the street in this condition.

Mrs. H. Then take your closed buggy, James, and I will hitch it up for you.

Hackett. Oh no, my dear wife, I will do that myself; I am more used to such work, and, besides, it is a young horse and might kick you.

(When Hackett has finished his toilet he leaves the room to go to the stable and get his horse and buggy to go down town to his store. After he has left the room,)

Mrs. H. (takes a chair to sit down near the table, and with a deep sigh, clasping both hands together and resting them on the table, says to herself:) That dreadful night is passed! (Pausing, then nodding her head) But a certain uneasy feeling haunts me continually, and I can't get rid of it. (Pausing and nodding her head again.) Perhaps there are some more rainy days and stormy nights in store for me! (Then, looking towards heaven, exclaims:) But if it is Your wish, oh Lord, that I should empty the bitter cup of life, (with consolation,) I am ready to do so: Thy will be done! (Raising her hands towards heaven.)

SCENE 4th.

(Close front flat to get Drug Store ready.)

John (appears in front, on his way down to store): Now, I wish that this Mr. Biddle would never show his face in the store any more; he is no companion for Mr. Hackett. My wife told me that there is a story afloat to the effect that Mr. Biddle is a gambler, and I noticed something about this myself. As I passed Mr. Sharkey's house the other evening I saw Biddle go in—and to what purpose? That house is a gambling hell, and nothing less. Since that man comes to the store, Mr. Hackett is not the same man any more; he got careless, and neglects his business. I used to take the money to the bank every Saturday; now, Mr. Hackett says he'll go himself; but he don't—I know it: *he needs it for other purposes!* And this is all Biddle's work. (Getting excited and shaking his fist.) But lookout, Mr. Biddle! If we meet, I might forget myself, in spite of your being a rich man. (Exit.)

SCENE 5th. The same Drug Store on Maiden Lane.

John (at his desk, when)

Hackett (enters): Good morning, John.

John. Good morning, Mr. Hackett.

Hackett. John, you have been up to the house this morning, demanding my presence down here in the store. Anything of importance, John?

John (coming down from his chair, with a card and two letters in his hand, approaching Mr. Hackett): There were three gentlemen here this morning; one of them was very angry not finding you here, and left his card for you, demanding an interview this evening (handing the card to Hackett); and the other two gentlemen left those letters here for you. (Handing the letters to Hackett, and then returning to his seat at the desk.)

Hackett (glancing over the card and nodding his head several times, sadly remarks:) My grave digger! (Then he takes a seat at the table in the store and quickly opens one of the letters. After reading for a few seconds, he turns the chair very sudden, and in a distracted manner exclaims:) Five thousand dollars! And where am I to get them from? (Sighing deeply, holding the letter in one hand and staring at the floor.)

John (at this moment turns his head, and, seeing Hackett in that position, shakes his head and murmurs half-aloud to himself:) Bad news!

Hackett (after remaining a few seconds in this position, very suddenly rises from his seat, and taking his hat, which he had placed on the table after reading, leaves the store in a hurry. In taking his hat he pushes the letters he has read a moment ago down from the table, and they fall to the floor.)

John (seeing this, alights from his chair, picks up the letters, opens and reads them, viz.:)

“MR. HACKETT.

Dear Sir!—Although your faithful friend and customer for a number of years, I *must* demand that money I loaned to you during the last three years, and which amounts to the sum of \$5,000 up to date; I hold your notes in my hands, as you are aware of. It is my painful duty to communicate with you in this way. You promised to settle matters long before this, and of late I went quite often to your store to have an interview with you and come to some understanding; but coming quite often, and never finding you in, there is no other way left for me to do. Unless you make satisfactory arrangements inside of three days, I shall have to close your store.

Yours,

W. LITTLE.”

(He has scarcely ended reading, when)

Hackett (comes back in excitement; footsteps are approaching the store.)

John (looking up and saying:) Hello! Mr. Hackett is coming back. I must pretend to know nothing about the letters. (And, quickly putting them on the table, he hurries back to his desk.)

Hackett (comes in much agitated, taking the letters from the table and casting mistrustive looks at John and the letters alternately, and then leaves the store.)

John (as soon as Hackett has left the store, quickly leaves his desk again, goes to the window to look after Hackett as he departs, and then exclaims, with a sigh:) Thank God! He did not ask me whether I read the letters or not. (Then, turning around, says:) “Unless you make satisfactory arrangements with me inside of three days, I shall close your store. Yours—W. Little.” (Then pausing, sighing, and nodding his head, exclaims:) Mr. Little, Mr. Little! I am afraid this

will prove too much for Mr. Hackett—five thousand dollars inside of three days!—And what did he mean when he looked at the card, exclaiming: “My grave digger!” Perhaps another five thousand dollars or more? And the grave digger demands an interview to-night. Then I’ll better lookout for *my* grave digger, too.—Oh! I pity such a wife as Mrs. Hackett is. For the last three months I noticed a sadness in her appearance; but she will never tell anybody what it is. She *must* have known about Mr. Hackett’s gambling business, but she will not tell anybody. She suffers and keeps silent. She is a hero of a wife—she is..... But it is time to close the store and go home. (Closes the store and goes home.)

(Close front flat to get minister’s Study ready.)

SCENE 6th. A scene of a street.

(John, on his way home, meets Biddle. John comes from one side of the stage and Biddle from the other, meeting in the center. John intends to pass by, but)

Biddle (taps him on the shoulder, saying:) Hello, John!

John (looking around): Hello, Biddle!

Biddle (looking surprised): See the impudence of an Irishman! (Getting close up to John and saying:) John, *my* name is *Mister* Biddle, not Biddle: you understand?

John (looks him into the face, saying emphatically:) *My* name is John, *Honest John*, sir! Can you say as much for yourself? (looking him sternly in the face.)

Biddle (gets very angry at this remark, clinching his fist and grinding his teeth, and turns about as if to strike John.)

John. Strike! Strike! You struck the poor Hackett family already with the devil’s claw! (Taking a fighting position.)

(At this moment)

A Policeman (appears, saying:) Hello, gentlemen! What’s the matter here? Don’t make a scene here, in a public street. (Then turning to John:) Why, John, I am surprised to see you in such excitement—and even ready to fight!

John. Yes, sir, and I am glad you stepped between in time; I am thankful to you.

(Policeman and John go off to one side, talking, and Biddle goes off to the other side.)

[End of 2nd act.]

ACT III.

SCENE 1st. A clergyman’s Study, with library in corner of room.

Dr. Peace (walking up and down the room and talking to himself, with head bowed down:) I thought I saw Mr. Hackett’s buggy passing by here a little while ago, but at such a speed that it was impossible for me to recognize exactly whether it was Hackett’s buggy or not.

(At this moment the rattling of wheels is heard.)

Dr. P. (looks through the window, exclaiming:) Yes! there he is. (And, opening the window, calls out:) Mr. Hackett! Mr. Hackett! (motioning with his hand.) Will you please come in for a few minutes? (Closing the window again, he says:) *Now* for the mystery!

Hackett (behind the scenery, knocking at the door.)

Dr. P. Come in!

Hackett (opens the door and, with a sad look, enters slowly, and being much disturbed, forgets to greet the minister.)

Dr. P. I am glad to see you, Mr. Hackett; will you please be seated? (taking a chair and offering it to Hackett.) I would like to converse a little with you, (in a very polite manner) if you have the time to spare.

Hackett (taking the chair): At your leisure with all my heart, Dr. Peace. (Sits down.)

Dr. P. Now, Mr. Hackett, you must promise me this (marking with finger of right hand into the palm of left hand): Whatever question I may ask you, you must not feel offended. I am your true friend. Don't look at me merely as a minister of the gospel to whose church you belong. *No!* But look at me as your best friend next to your wife, to whom you can intrust secrets,—and not a second person, besides me, shall know of it. You might have reasons to be angry with me for being so bold as to mention the word *secret*; but, my dear friend Hackett, I cannot wait any longer after what I have seen and heard *last night*. (Hackett shudders at the words "last night.") The cry of *murder* and *help* by your daughter May, and then the rushing of two policemen into your house, which was plainly visible from my window; and then I could see the shadows of persons moving quickly about inside of your parlor: (assuming a mysterious look)— — —And all was quiet again. Now, my dear Mr. Hackett, if you only explain to me how this was brought about, I will promise you before heaven and by my holy oath (raising right arm towards heaven) that not a word of it shall pass my lips to a second person besides yourself. I had no sleep all last night; the excitement was too much for me. I've known you for the last ten years, and whenever you in company with your wife and child made your appearance in our church on Sunday, my heart was filled with joy and I said to myself (stretching out his arm and pointing with finger): There comes the Hackett family, or, better said, the *happy* family.

Hackett (is seated at the table with his elbow upon it, his hand pressed against his forehead, staring at the floor and listening to Dr. Peace's speech. At the words "*happy* family" he quickly raises his head and with emotion and outstretched arms exclaims:) The summons of God! Speak, Dr. Peace, *speak!* I will confess all. (He is overcome by emotion, his breast moving heavily, and quite a little while elapses before he is able to collect himself sufficiently to relate the following:) Dr. Peace! What you saw last night is true. I confess with shame that I came home,—or rather was brought home by my friends, because I was so intoxicated that I was not able to walk without the aid of somebody.

Dr. P. (turns aside, clasping his hands, and murmurs half aloud:) Drunk! Heaven help you.

Hackett. As you know, Dr. Peace, last night was a rainy and stormy night. My friends, who had made quite the same mistake as I, could not well uphold themselves and me at the same time; so it happened that they forgot about me once in a while, and in one of those moments I lost my balance and fell against a lamp-post and hurt myself pretty badly, and in that condition, Dr. Peace (here Hackett is overcome by emotion) I met—I met— my dear wife, sobbing, and my child. (Sobbing and covering his face with his handkerchief.)

Dr. P. (approaches Hackett, and laying his hand upon his shoulder, speaks very kindly to him:) Mr. Hackett! You have made a great mistake, undoubtedly; but we are mortals, and liable to make mis-

takes in some shape or other, and we must never condemn our fellow-men because temptation was so strong that in an hour of weakness they could not resist and fell. Don't be disheartened, friend Hackett; we must forgive each other, like Christians, for making mistakes; we will fix that all right again, and I am sure that Mrs. Hackett will not mention it after this any more; and as for me, you are just as welcome as ever before—and if you had been ever so intoxicated, friend Hackett! (taking Hackett's right hand and shaking it.)

Hackett (looking at Dr. Peace for a moment, and then leaving his chair, walking up and down the room in great excitement; then at once stretching forth his arms and clasping his hands, exclaims:) Oh, Dr. Peace! I wish to God that this was all; but this is not all: I am here to confess, and I will do so. Here, read this card and these two letters (handing card and letter to Dr. P. and then drops down on a chair in despair, his head lowered.)

Dr. P. (taking the same and commencing to read the card, as follows:)

“MR. HACKETT.

Dear Sir:—I demand an interview this evening to settle matters at once, as I don't intent to wait any longer.

Yours,

G. SHARKEY.”

(To Hackett:) Why, Mr. Hackett! You don't mean to say that this card comes from Mr. Sharkey, the keeper of the gambling hell down on Whitehall street?

Hackett (in a low voice): Yes, sir, the same.

Dr. P. (surprised): But for God's sake, how did you get entangled with *this* man? And if so, how did it happen that you borrowed money from *him*? If you needed money very bad, why did you not come to *me*; I would have given you all I possess; and, moreover, you have plenty of friends, besides me, in the city of New York who would come forward at any time to advance you a couple of thousand dollars if you only asked them for it. Your reputation as a gentleman and your financial standing are good enough for quite a large amount at any time. But I cannot understand what made you borrow money from this man. (Pausing a while, then nodding his head and walking about the room.) I understand—another victim of liquor!

Hackett (quickly arises from his chair, stretching out his arm and saying:) No, Dr. Peace, *not* liquor, but *gambling*! (Dropping down in his chair again, repeating half-aloud:) *Gambling*!

Dr. P. (turning very sudden at this remark, with amazement calls out aloud:) Gambling? (facing Hackett spellbound; then continues:) And how on God's earth *did* you come to gambling, Mr. Hackett? What devil in human disguise tempted *you* to gamble?

(Silence prevails for a while. Then)

Hackett (begins as follows:) Dr. Peace—you know my friend, Biddle?

Dr. P. Yes! I only wish that he was no friend of yours.—But proceed, Mr. Hackett—proceed.

Hackett. Well, about six months ago I had a note to pay to the amount of one thousand dollars. The day was a rainy and stormy one, and I did not do any business at all, and we closed our store before six o'clock in the evening. Mr. Biddle came in my store the same afternoon, and while speaking of different subjects I told him that I had to go and get money before to-morrow, in order to make payment the next day following. Then Mr. Biddle asked me where I generally got the money from. I told him that I always go to the bank,

as I did not like to trouble my friends about short loans, because there was always plenty of money coming to me to pay it back shortly afterwards. Mr. Biddle said, why I did not tell him of this? He knew a man that would advance the money on short loans at any time, and nobody would know anything about it. Then I asked who that man was; and Mr. Biddle told me that this man was George Sharkey, the gambling-house keeper. I told Mr. Biddle that was all right; but going to a gambling house to loan money was out of my line of business. Then Biddle told me that Mr. Sharkey would not loan money to everybody, but only to good men of solid standing; he then told me how much less I had to pay by taking the money from Sharkey, instead of going to the bank. I felt somewhat flattered at the former remark, and I made up my mind to try it, and told Mr. Biddle to give me an introduction to Mr. Sharkey, as I was not personally acquainted with him. On that evening Biddle and I went together to Mr. Sharkey's place; Mr. Biddle introduced me to Mr. Sharkey; I was most cordially welcomed, and got the loan of one thousand dollars for one month most politely. Afterwards Mr. Biddle again requested me some night to accompany him to Sharkey's place, as he had a little business transaction there, and then we would return together and go home. Afterwards we repeated our visits and sat together with Mr. Sharkey and lady in a little room next to the gambling room, and had the opportunity to learn how quickly money was lost and won. I must admit that this place was kept very orderly and as quiet as a church.—One night we sat together in the little room, when Sharkey was called in by one of the gamblers to make change for a five-hundred-dollar note. Sharkey went out and quickly came back with the news that a wealthy merchant of New Orleans had just won a thousand dollars. Mr. Biddle got so excited over this news that he resolved to try his luck also. He went into the gambling room and began to play. After half an hour had elapsed I desired to go home and asked Mr. Sharkey whether he would not oblige and inform Mr. Biddle of it. Mr. Sharkey very politely consented and went to see Mr. Biddle; but he very soon came back with the message that Mr. Biddle was doing quite well and did not like to break away. I took my hat, bidding Mrs. and Mr. Sharkey good night, and went home.—The next day I met Mr. Biddle and asked him how he came out. Oh, very well—said he—I got a couple of hundred dollars out of them. This kindled my desire for gambling for the *first time*, and I said to myself: Why, I can afford to loose a couple of hundred dollars! and told Biddle to call on next evening—I would like to try my luck also. I went, night after night,—won and lost, and lost and won again. One night I won five hundred dollars. This spurred my ambition to win more. I gambled—and lost heavily. I took all the money I could get hold of—and lost it. Bills became due—and I could not make payments, and in order to prevent suspicion I borrowed money from Mr. Little, of Providence, to the amount of five thousand dollars, and he holds my notes for it. But the notes became due long ago, and I could not make payments. The store could not supply me for the losses I sustained in gambling, so I went and borrowed money to the amount of three thousand dollars from Mr. Sharkey, which he now demands, this evening.... Now read the other letters, Dr. Peace.

Dr. Peace (takes the other letters, opens one and reads it for a moment, then exclaims most alarmingly:) *Another five thousand dollars! Good God! Man, you are lost!!* (stretching forth both arms, turning quickly and pacing the room in an opposite direction from Hackett. As Dr. P. turns his back to him,)

Hackett (panick-stricken and seemingly deranged in mind, runs out of the room.)

Dr. P. (as he gets to the other end of the room, turns around to assume speech again. When he sees that Hackett has left, he gets uneasy and runs up to the door, opening it and calling at the top of his voice:) Mr. Hackett! Mr. Hackett! Come back! (Listening for a few seconds, overwhelmed with excitement, he turns away from the door and, holding up his hand with the letters, exclaims:) Gone out of my sight! (dropping down in a chair and staring at the floor of his room. After pausing for a few seconds he stretches forth the hand in which he holds the letters, and shaking them towards the audience, exclaims:) Here I hold the documents of destruction of a once happy family. The head of it, seemingly, disregards my well-meaning counsel, and by this time—perhaps absent-minded—is wandering about God knows where,—and there an innocent wife and child, to fall victims of a gambling hell! (Pausing, then clasping his hands above his head and making hasty steps about the room, exclaiming:) Oh, Lord! - Have mercy on this unfortunate family. Enlighten me, and show me a way how I may be able to save them from destruction!

(Change of scene. Get Hackett's parlor and bed-room ready.)

SCENE 2nd. Close front flat, to represent a public street.

Hackett (now in a deranged condition, comes rushing in, much frightened, turning his head quickly and restless about, his silk-hat leaning towards the back part of his neck, with a hoarse voice and in an agitated manner exclaims:) *Five thousand dollars, or I am lost!* (clasping his hands and pausing a little while.)

(Here the **tooting of a locomotive whistle** is heard.)

Hackett (with a crazy smile, turns up his head and says:) Ah! there she goes. I must hurry to catch that train and get the five thousand dollars! (Hurries off.)

SCENE 3rd. Hackett's parlor and bed-room, visible to the audience at once.

(Mrs. Hackett, looking very pale and distressed, sitting at the bedside of her sick child. The servant girl, Hattie, dusting off the furniture, when knocking at the door is heard.)

Hattie. Come in!

(The door opens, and Dr. Peace and Mr. Little enter.)

Dr. P. (to Hattie, very politely): Can we have the pleasure of seeing Mrs. Hackett?

Hattie. Yes, sir! I will go and call her immediately.

Dr. P. Thank you.

Hattie (goes to the door of the sick-room, opens it, and in a low voice speaks to Mrs. H.): Mrs. Hackett! Dr. Peace wishes to speak to you.

Mrs. Hackett (immediately leaves her chair, opens the door of the bed-room and approaches Dr. P., stretching out both hands towards him. Too much moved, she puts the hand in which she holds a handkerchief up to her eyes and commences to sob.)

Dr. P. (in a rather solemn manner): Mrs. Hackett, I introduce to you Mr. Little, of Providence (making a low bow.)

Little (very much touched at this sight, walks up to Mrs. H., saying:) Mrs. Hackett, I am here as your friend and will stand by you in your days of trial, and we'll not leave you unprotected (taking her hand; and turning to Dr. Peace, says:) Will we, Doctor?

Dr. P. No, indeed—not as long as the protection of friends is needed.

(At this time)

May (in her bed, calls out:) Papa! Oh, Papa! Don't leave me; come back again, come back!

Mrs. Hackett (on hearing her child, sadly): Excuse me, gentlemen; I will be back soon. (Going to the sick-room, while the gentlemen wait in the parlor. Then saying to May:) What is it, my child? Do you want anything?

May (in a trembling voice): Oh, mama, I have had that horrid dream again!

Mrs. H. What dream, my child?

May. Don't you know? The same dream that papa had left me and I did not see him any more.

Mrs. H. Now keep quiet, my dear child, you need rest—will you?

May. Yes, dear mama.

(Dr. P. and Little are listening and much touched by this conversation.)

Little. Oh, Dr. Peace, I cannot stand this any longer. (Sits down, takes out his handkerchief to wipe the tears from his eyes.)

Mrs. H. (at this moment comes out of the bed-room.)

Little. Mrs. Hackett, your child seems to be very sick; have you a doctor?

Mrs. H. Yes, sir, we have Drs. Dunsmore and Higbee both. The sudden disappearance of her father worries her day and night. Very often in the night she will call out: "Oh, papa, don't leave me; come back!" And the first thing in the morning she will ask for her papa. I tell her that he has gone to the country on business and will soon be home again.—Now, gentlemen, you can imagine what I have to endure: Long sleepless nights—and separation from my husband without knowing the cause of it. (Here she drops down on a chair, covering her face with her handkerchief and weeping severely.)

(Dr. P. and Little take out their handkerchiefs and lower their heads to wipe away the tears from their eyes. A dead silence prevails for a while before Mrs. H. is able to collect herself. Then)

Little (takes courage to resume conversation again and asks of Mrs. H.): How long has your husband been absent from home, Mrs. Hackett?

Mrs. H. (slowly raising her head, sobbing:) It is going on four weeks. (Turning to Dr. P.): Is it not, Doctor?

Dr. P. (sadly:) Yes, Mrs. Hackett—about that long.

Little. He was in my house about ten days ago and told me he intended to be out in the country for a couple of days longer and then return home again. Perhaps business matters might have delayed his return. (Holding his hand to one side of his face and turning away, exclaims half-aloud:) God forgive that lie! I have not seen him for six months.

Mrs. H. (somewhat encouraged by the previous remark, questions quickly:) And did he not mention anything about his family, Mr. Little?

Little. Oh, yes, madam. When I told him that I intended to go to New York in two or three days, he told me to give his kindest regards to his wife and child. (Turning quickly aside and half-aloud:) Another lie!—(To Mrs. H.): But, by the way, how is your clerk, John, getting

along with the business all by himself? Can you intrust the whole business to him during Mr. Hackett's absence?

Dr. P. Friend Little, we simply call this clerk *Honest John*; and not in vain, for he is in reality a most honest and competent man to manage that business without the aid of anybody, if need be. I go down to the store now and then, and find everything in the very best condition; you see, we are all right on this point, friend Little.

Little (taking Dr. P.'s hand): And with the help of God and good people we shall soon be able to have the remaining affairs all right.

Dr. P. and **Little** (take their hats from the table, bidding Mrs. H. good-bye and then leading their steps towards the door.)

Mrs. H. (accompanies them to the door, saying:) Good-bye, gentlemen! I hope to see you soon again. (Closes the door. After she has done so she comes back, takes a seat at the table, puts her elbow on it to let her forehead rest on her hand, staring at the floor thoughtfully. Pausing for a few seconds and then shaking her head, she says slowly:) Where can he be by this time!

1st Tableau (in the back-ground.)

(Flat opens, and Tableau at the back-ground of stage reveals Hackett passing through the woods, with valise in hand, shabby-looking clothes and bareheaded, with head bowed down. Close upon Hackett follows the devil in a black cloak, claws on his fingers and a horse-foot, the hair on his head standing upright; he has a long nose and a face of brownish color, and fire-like flashes about the eyes. He follows Hackett with eagerness, stretching out his right hand towards him, until at middle of stage; here he comes up to an old stump of a tree about 6 or 7 feet high, when at once the stump is transformed into an angel in a white dress and with golden hair, who with a stern look and a warning hand bids the devil to stop. The devil, on seeing the angel, is terror-stricken, turns trembling around and with long steps beats a hasty retreat.)

(Close front flat.)

SCENE 4th. Street scene.

(Dr. P. and Little appear together, as if on a walk, and stop at center of stage.)

Dr. P. Well, Mr. Little, I am ever so thankful to you for your kindness in giving this unfortunate family your hearty support in such a deplorable matter. Look at *me*—a minister of the gospel—to get mixed up with such family affairs. It is lucky for me that I have no family to care for.—By the way, did I tell you about the three thousand dollars which Mr. Hackett owes to Mr. Sharkey, the gambling-house keeper on Whitehall street?

Little. Yes, you did; but *what* of it? This man keeps a gambling house, and his name is Sharkey. *Sharks* are dangerous animals; they generally swallow whatever they can get a hold of.

Dr. P. Not as bad as that, friend Little. You must not be too severe on our fellow-creatures.

Little (sarcastically): Well, then, I will not be hard on them, as there is a minister of the gospel in the play; I believe in the gospel; the Almighty might have transformed the lion into a lamb, for all I know. But proceed, Dr. Peace; I will listen.

Dr. P. This is no time for being sarcastic; but listen and be astonished, friend Little! I had saved up the sum of fifteen hundred dol-

lars, cash, besides my little house. I went to Mr. Sharkey and told him about Mr. Hackett's mysterious disappearance, his debts, and the condition of his wife and child. I gave him a thousand dollars, and told him to have patience with the rest of the money due; I would be responsible for it, and he would get his money as fast as circumstances would permit. (With a surprising look:) Well, what do you think he said?

Little. Well, if he is a sensible man with *any* feeling for an unfortunate family, he *accepted* your terms.

Dr. P. He not only accepted my terms, but said to me: "Mr. Peace, you see these notes?" Yes, sir! said I. "Well," said he, tearing up one of them, "tell Mrs. Hackett that she owes me only *one* thousand dollars; and tell her, furthermore, that I leave it to *her* to make her own terms of payment, and that I will never be troublesome to her."

Little (with amazement, taking Dr. Peace's hand:) Well, Dr. Peace, you *are* a true apostle; and as for Mr. Sharkey, I don't know *what* to say. I feel like going to shake hands with him and proclaim in the papers that Mr. Sharkey is the best man on earth! (pausing a little:) that is, Doctor, if he did not keep a gambling house. Now, Doctor, let us sum up the whole debt Mr. Hackett is involved in. (Marking with first finger of right hand on palm of left hand, beginning to relate:) Now, there is Mr. Sharkey, with one thousand dollars—and God's blessing on him for his charitable act! Then comes myself, with three thousand dollars—

Dr. P. (interrupting quickly): *Five* thousand dollars!

Little (in the same position, gazing Dr. P. in the face, exclaiming emphatically:) *Three* thousand dollars, Doctor, since the gambling-house man taught me how to be charitable!

Dr. P. God bless you for *that*, Mr. Little!

L. Thank you, Doctor! We must not leave all the blessings to Him, but try and do *our* share of it, and while we have such a good opportunity let us make the most of it.—By the way, from whom is the other five-thousand-dollar pill, Doctor?

Dr. P. Why, from William Randall, the up-town druggist. That's what the letter says.

L. Oh, ho! William Randall, the rich up-town druggist, is it?

Dr. P. Yes, the same; but I am not much acquainted with him.

L. Never mind; leave *him* to *me*; I know him well, and I will teach him how to be charitable.

Dr. P. Why, my friend, you seem to be in good humor.

L. Doctor, I always am that way when I have done a good deed. (Then motioning with his finger:) Now you wait, Doctor, and if I don't cut Mr. Randall down to three thousand dollars, my name is not Little!

Dr. P. (most happily tripping about and clapping his hands): Good! good! friend Little.

[End of 3rd act.]

ACT IV.

SCENE 1st. Hackett's Parlor.

(Mrs. Hackett sitting at the table, with her elbow resting upon it, and with forehead resting on her hand, looking pale and distressed. The clock strikes nine.)

Mrs. Hackett (turning her head towards the clock, with a deep sigh exclaims): I wish the doctor would come!

Dr. Dunsmore (ringing the door-bell behind the scenes.)

Mrs. H. (goes to the door and opens it.)

Dr. Dunsmore (coming in): Good morning, Mrs. Hackett.

Mrs. H. Good morning, Doctor.

Dr. D. How did the child rest last night?

Mrs. H. Very bad, Doctor: very bad. The same thing: Calling for her papa to come back.

Dr. D. (shakes his head and goes to the sick-room; soon returning, says in a low voice:) She sleeps, and I will not disturb her; she needs rest badly. (Sits down by the table, takes a prescription-book from his coat-pocket, writes a prescription and hands it to Mrs. H.:) Mrs. Hackett! Get this medicine for to-night and give it to the girl according to directions, and tell me how the child rested thereafter. She is homesick to her father, and too much medicine is not advisable. (Takes his hat.) I shall call again to-morrow morning.—Good morning, Mrs. Hackett! (Exit.)

Mrs. H. (sitting again at the table, as in the beginning of the scene, shaking her head slowly): Oh, James! Oh, James! *Why* did you leave your wife and child without bidding them a last good-bye? Not even a few lines of comfort in a letter! This is not the act of the good and noble-hearted James Hackett. (Sobbing and drying her eyes with her handkerchief. After a few seconds she very suddenly leaves the chair, and placing both hands on each side of her head as if frightened by some terrible vision, exclaims:) What frightful thoughts are dawning upon me:—Insane, or committed suicide! (Much alarmed, she stretches both arms upward, calling out aloud:) Good heavens! Not as bad as that,—not as bad as *that*, I hope!

(Close front flat.)

SCENE 2nd. Representing Union Square, with Park and Washington Statue. Set out one or two benches.

(Dr. Peace and Little meeting at center of stage, coming from either side.)

Little. Dr. Peace, I am very glad to meet you; I have been hunting for you all this morning!

Dr. Peace (very eagerly): Well, my good man, what has been the result of your mission to Mr. Randall? Does he comprehend?

L. Comprehend?—I *made* him comprehend. I told him all about Mr. Hackett's mysterious disappearance; I told him, furthermore, what you and I already had done to aid the poor family in their present misery; then I told him how nobly Mr. Sharkey, the gambling-house man, had acted. The tears came to his eyes, and he said: "My dear friend Little! The gambling-house man has done with me what no minister of the gospel could do in this case. I'll surrender arms, horses and *all*,—tell me how much it shall be?"—I said: Now look here, Randall. I don't

want horses and all; all I want is this: You make out a note for three thousand dollars instead of five thousand dollars, and give Mrs. Hackett unlimited time to pay it, and I will indorse it—will that be satisfactory to you? He said: "More than satisfactory!" and sat down to make out the note according to my wishes.

Dr. P. (steps back in astonishment, exclaiming:) Friend Little! This time the gambling-house man and the druggist put the minister decidedly in the shade on charity!—As we have done our duty, spiritually and materially, let us now change the subject, my friend.

L. Well, Doctor, what is your opinion about Hackett's sudden disappearance?

Dr. P. (thoughtfully): After reviewing the whole affair carefully, I come to the conclusion that he either got deranged in mind and is roaming about, or, what is worse, *committed suicide*.

(Pause.)

L. (with downcast looks, shaking his head): My dear Doctor! I am afraid you are right.

Dr. P. Now, what puzzles me is *this*: If he committed suicide on land, we would have seen something in the papers about it by this time; it is now over six weeks since he disappeared—

L. (interrupting): But if he committed suicide by jumping into the water, it sometimes takes a long while before the body is discovered; and, furthermore, if he had gone crazy, he would have been taken to a safety-place by the authorities of the respective locality. We may receive information to such effect at any moment. Until then we must be content, and try to pacify Mrs. Hackett the best we can.—By the way, Dr. Peace, I met Dr. Dunsmore on the street, and he informed me that Little May Hackett is *very* low, and he did not think she would get over it unless her father came home again.

Dr. P. Then let us go and see how the child is—if you have a little time to spare.

L. All right, Doctor; let us go at once.

(Exit both.)

(Open front flat.)

SCENE 3rd. Hackett's parlor and sick-room.)

(Dr. Dunsmore and another physician sitting in the parlor, consulting. May in bed, with her mother seated by her side.)

Dr. Peace (behind the scenes, knocking at the door.)

Dr. Dunsmore (goes and opens it.)

(Dr. Peace and Little enter.)

Dr. P. (to Dr. Dunsmore, in a low tone): Well, Doctor, how is the child?

Dr. Dunsmore (holding his finger to his lips and taking Dr. P. to one side, saying with a subdued voice): The child will not live much longer.

Dr. P. (raising his head and hand and dropping the same again, nodding several times.)

(Again knocking at the door.)

Dr. Dunsmore (opens it.)

Two Girls (enter, and first girl asks in a bashful way:) Can we see May?

Dr. Dunsmore. Yes, girls! (Goes into the sick-room and says to Mrs. Hackett in a low voice:) Please, come into the parlor! Several playmates of May are waiting. (Returns to parlor.)

Mrs. Hackett (walks slowly into the parlor.)

Girl. Mrs. Hackett! Mrs. Courtland, our Sunday-school teacher, wishes to know how May is getting along.

Mrs. H. (motions to the girls to come to the sick-room.)

Girls (walk into the sick-room, and, approaching the sick girl, call out in a low voice:;) May! May! Are you better?

May (after a little pause, stretches out her white hands to shake with her school-mates.)

(Each of the girls take May's hand and shakes it slowly. Then)

Girl (speaks softly:) May, will you not speak to us?

May (slowly raises her hand and points towards heaven, then drops it again, without speaking.)

Dr. Dunsmore (at this moment goes to the sick-room, takes the bottle containing medicine and pours some in a tea-spoon, offering it to May.)

May (slowly pushes the spoon from her lips.)

Dr. Dunsmore (returns to the parlor and in a low voice says to Dr. P. and Little:) The hour has come!

(All in the parlor then go into the sick-room.)

(During all this transaction Mrs. Hackett is lying face downward on the bed. May begins to move a little, which causes Mrs. H. to raise the child's head, looking in its face despairingly. Then at once

May (in agony, calls out aloud:) Oh, papa! Don't leave me! Come back! (Softer:) Come back! (Very faint:) —back! (Slowly sinking back and dying.)

Mrs. H. (at this moment throws herself on the child, embraces it and cries out in a heart-rending manner:) May! May! Dear child, don't leave me! Don't leave me! (Weeping bitterly.)

(Both girls kneeling down before the bed, the gentlemen lowering their heads; but Dr. Peace lifting his hands in prayer, looking towards heaven.)

2nd Tableau (in the back-ground.)

(Hackett sleeping in a bush on a grassy spot, a little bundle on a rough walking-cane beside him; a little angel, representing the spirit of his departed daughter, standing close to him, with one hand pointing towards heaven.)

(Picture remains until curtain down.)

(Music: "Home, Sweet Home.")

[End of 4th act.]

ACT V.

SCENE 1st. *) Hackett's parlor, in mourning attire.

(May Hackett in coffin, dressed in white, and wreath around her head. Mrs. Hackett sitting beside the coffin, dressed in black, with handkerchief held up to her face, once in a while casting a look at her daughter and again covering her face with her handkerchief. Four boys appear, with their hats in hand, as pall-bearers; then follow ten girls, dressed in white, with wreaths around their heads—school-mates of May. Dr. Peace, Little, Randall and Sharkey are present. The four boys take hold of the coffin and the ten girls follow, two by two; then Dr. Peace, supporting Mrs. Hackett by the arm; then follow Dr. Dunsmore, Little, Randall and Sharkey,—marching out of the parlor to the time of a solemn funeral march by the orchestra.)

3rd Tableau (in the back-ground.)

(When all out of the parlor and behind the stage, the flat opens and the slopy hill called Greenwood Cemetery, with its monuments and willow trees, is visible to the audience. Numerous coaches [in miniature] from all directions are to be seen moving to their respective destination, among them the May-Hackett funeral. The coaches come to a halt; the pall-bearers come forward with the coffin, the ten girls and the rest follow [all in miniature]. While this procession is moving, the scene is closed.)

(Front flat closes.)

SCENE 2nd Street scene.

Randall (appears from side of stage, exclaiming with a heavy sigh): Poor May Hackett! Dead and buried! A good child—the victim of her father's bad company!

A Newsboy (coming along from opposite direction and calling out:) Herald! Tribune! World! All about the conventions!

Randall. Hello, boy! Give me the Herald.

Newsboy (hands it to him.)

Randall. How much?

Newsboy. Five cents, sir!

Randall (gives the boy the money and opens the paper.)

Newsboy (turns and walks off, calling out as before.)

Randall (after reading a while, all at once says:) Hello! What is this? (Reading aloud:)

“Information wanted.

GREEN BAY, Wisconsin, August 20th, 1860.—An insane man, although very harmless, going from house to house inquiring for his wife and child, has been taken care of by the city authorities of this place and brought to safe keeping, until it can be ascertained where the unfortunate creature belongs. By all appearances the poor man belongs to a respectable family; his clothes are made of good material, but torn and dirty, and must not have been changed for two months, at least. The police found him at Brady's bakery, where he went to

*) This scene may be omitted without the combination of the drama being affected.

help himself to bread. All our citizens pity the poor man, especially our good mayor, who—always ready to help the unfortunate—sent immediately for Dr. Reed, an expert in such cases. We may say that this man is taken good care of until we are able to find out where he belongs.”

(Amazed at the reading of this news, Randall exclaims:) By heavens! This is Mr. Hackett beyond doubt! I must hurry to see Dr. Peace and show him this item in the *Herald*. (Exit.)

(Change of scene; have Dr. Peace's Study ready.)

SCENE 3rd. Dr. Peace's study, with library in the corner.

Dr. Peace (sitting at the table with a pile of newspapers, taking one after another and reading them; after putting down the last one, he says:) Most singular! I purchased all the newspapers I could get hold of—even from the country, as far as I have been able to obtain them,—and *no clue* as to the fate of our poor friend Hackett!

Randall (knocking at the door.)

Dr. P. Come in!

Randall (enters, with folded newspaper in hand, exclaiming in a rather cheerful way:) Good morning, Dr. Peace! How are you to-day?

Dr. P. (in a sensitive mood:) My dear friend Randall! How can you ask such a question? Owing to circumstances none of us could be in good feeling; and how should it be otherwise? Look at the misery in the Hackett family! Six months ago a highly respectable and happy family—and look at it *now*! The child dead, the father disappeared—perhaps *dead*, too! God only knows; and poor Mrs. Hackett—look at her: reduced to a shadow,—and all on account of *gambling* and *drink*! (looking Randall in the face, excitedly.)

Randall (in a pacifying tone): Now, my dear friend, don't forget that you are a clergyman; be patient and trust in *Him* that rules the world and all that is in it!

Dr. P. Yes, my dear friend! But even the patience of a clergyman may be exhausted in such a case. See what I have already endured—and I don't see the end of it yet. I am but a poor mortal—not more! (shaking his head.)

Randall. Now, my dear friend, have you got the *Herald* of this morning?

Dr. P. No, sir, I have not been out to-day. See the lot of newspapers (pointing at the pile on the table.) I bought up all the papers I could get hold of. I find all kinds of news, but nothing concerning our poor friend Hackett.

Randall (triumphantly, handing his paper to Dr. P.): Now, read this, Dr. Peace!

Dr. P. (taking the paper and beginning to read aloud): “Information wanted.—Green Bay, Wisconsin, August 20th, 1860. An insane man, although very harmless, going from house to house inquiring for his wife and child”— (Here Dr. P. falls back in a chair, exclaiming:) *Good God! This is poor Hackett.*

Randall. Read on, Doctor! Read on.

Dr. P. (reads the rest of the letter silently. Then, overcome by this news, stretches both arms towards heaven and then laying his head on table; remains so for a few seconds, then raises his head slowly, stretching his arms towards Randall to grasp his hands.)

(Silence prevails for a while, both staring at each other, before speech is resumed again.)

Randall. Now, what is to be done first, Dr. Peace?

Dr. P. I'll send a dispatch to the mayor of Green Bay; and will you be kind enough to take it to the telegraph office?

Randall. With pleasure.

Dr. P. Very good. (Sits by the table and writes the following, and then reads it aloud to Randall:)

“NEW YORK CITY, August 21st, 1860.

To His Honor the Mayor of Green Bay, Wisconsin.

Take good care of the insane man. I will start at once to take charge of him, and settle matters accordingly.

Yours,

REV. CHAS. PEACE.”

Now, Randall, you go to the telegraph office, while I will get ready to start on the next train for Green Bay. Then wait for my answer.—So far, so good, my friend Randall.

Randall (starting for the door to go, then turning about, says:) Hold on, Doctor: Have you no message for Mrs. Hackett? She will, undoubtedly, see this item in the *Herald*—if she has not already.

Dr. P. My dear friend: Go to Mrs. Hackett at once, and if she don't know anything about it, you show her this item and tell her that I have already gone to Green Bay and she would get the particulars as soon as I am able to send them; tell her, further, that she must not believe things as represented in the papers—the papers, as a rule, use too much “black” ink in many respects.

Randall. All right; I shall strive to put things in a favorable light. Good-bye, Dr. Peace! (Exit.)

Dr. P. (as Randall is about shutting the door): Good-bye, Randall! (Then raising his head, he says:) Now to my mission! (and quickly leaves the room.)

(Close front flat.)

SCENE 4th. Street scene.

(Get Hackett's parlor ready while

Randall (appears in front of stage, on his way to bear news to Mrs. Hackett, with newspaper in hand, in a gloomy mood saying:) A nice mess I got into! I would gladly give the remaining sum of Hackett's debt to Mrs. Hackett if all was over. But I can't see the end of it.—(Pauses for a while; then goes on:) There is Dr. Peace—he's got the heaviest load of it, and he cheerfully puts his shoulder to the wheel and will not rest until all is accomplished. Shame on you, Randall! Shame on you! This faithful Christian leader cheerfully gives the savings of years to those in distress, and I complain because I was asked to lend a helping hand.—No, Randall! If you call yourself a *Christian*, help those in distress, no matter in what shape they come before you. (Exit.)

SCENE 5th. Hackett's parlor.

(Mrs. Hackett and Hattie sitting at the table loaded with newspapers, reading newspapers.)

Hattie (putting the paper she was reading on the pile on the table, exclaiming in a sorrowful manner): Mrs. Hackett, I can't find anything concerning Mr. Hackett's whereabouts.

Randall (knocking at the door.)

Mrs. Hackett. Come in!

Randall (opening the door, with a rather cheerful expression and newspaper in hand): Good day, ladies!

Mrs. H. (with a deep sigh): Good day, Mr. Randall, I am glad to see you.

Randall. I am glad to hear you say so, Mrs. Hackett; and in return I have hopeful news for you.

Mrs. H. (somewhat surprised, leaves her chair and approaches Randall, exclaiming): Well, Mr. Randall, what is it that's hopeful you say? Explain yourself, please! (staring at Randall.)

Randall. Well, Mrs. Hackett, you know that Dr. Peace took your sad case much at heart, and at the very beginning of Mr. Hackett's disappearance he sent dispatches all over the country, wherever he had friends or other acquaintances, informing them that a very dear friend of his—giving name and description—had disappeared, and any information would be thankfully received. This morning this paper came to our hands, containing an item that seems full of hope in the matter of his endeavors. But Dr. Peace told me before he left on his mission that you should not worry yourself too much about the item referred to, as newspapers generally apply too much color in writing up items. (Here he presents the paper to Mrs. H.)

Mrs. H. (on reading the item, is overcome by emotion, leaves the chair, walking about the room and exclaiming): Oh, James! Oh, James! If I could see you alive again, I would forgive you all! (Wiping her tears with her handkerchief and then turning to Randall, she says:) And Dr. Peace has already left for Green Bay, as I understand you?

R. Yes, Madame; and he will send us a letter as soon as possible and tell us all about it—if the person mentioned in the item is really Mr. Hackett.

Mrs. H. (weeping for joy and exclaiming): Oh, Mr. Randall, this *is* poor James, *my husband*—I feel it! Please let me go and see him!

R. Mrs. Hackett, be content! In a few days we shall know more about it. In the meantime Dr. Peace will have sufficient opportunity to make observations. It would not be advisable for you to go and see your husband under such circumstances. Trust to the Almighty!—I shall see you as soon as I receive a dispatch or a letter from Dr. Peace. Good day, Mrs. Hackett! (Exit.)

Mrs. H. (as Randall opens the door): Good day, Mr. Randall!

(While Mrs. H. thoughtfully and silently reads over again the item in the paper, drop the curtain.)

[End of 5th act.]

ACT VI.

SCENE 1st. Hackett's parlor.

(Mrs. Hackett sitting at the table, reading a newspaper.)

John (knocking at the door.)

Mrs. Hackett. Come in!

John (with letter in his hand and a cheerful look, enters and says:) Mr. Randall gave me this letter last night, and told me to hand it to you in the morning (handing the letter.)

Mrs. H. (taking the letter and looking at the address, reads aloud:) "Mrs. J. Hackett, New York City." (Then turning to John, says in a surprised manner:) Why, John! This letter is not from abroad? I don't see any postage on it.

John. I don't know about *that*, Mrs. Hackett; but Mr. Randall told me to tell you that you should read the letter, and act most strictly and carefully according to the contents of it.—Have you any orders for me?

Mrs. H. No, John; you may go down to the store, and if I should need you I will send for you.

John. All right, Mrs. Hackett. (Exit.)

Mrs. H. (opens the letter and reads aloud:)

"GREEN BAY, Wis., August 25th, 1860.

Friend Randall:—I take great pleasure in announcing my safe arrival in Green Bay. I immediately went to find Mayor Goodwin, of this place, and in a short time I had the pleasure of meeting him. I told him who I was and what brought me hither. He was really glad to see me, and he told me that Mr. Hackett is entirely out of danger, as the case was not that of a raving madness, but simply a temporary disorder of the brain which is caused by sudden disastrous news—such as failure in business or a heavy loss of money—which his mind was not strong enough to bear. I for my part did not like to relate the circumstances how it came about, and therefore remarked to Mayor Goodwin that I could not account for it, as Mr. Hackett's financial standing is as good as any in the city of New York. I then offered to pay him for all trouble and expenses incurred; but he refused, saying: 'Dr. Peace, we are always ready to help the unfortunate, *without first bargaining for it*; and I am sure you would have done as much.' Then he got up and told me that he was ready to go with me to my friend Hackett, which, of course, I most cheerfully accepted.

When we got to the house, the mayor entered the room ahead of me, and I followed. Mr. Hackett sat at a table, examining a lot of photographs; he then looked up and, on seeing me, first stared at me for a while, then got up and, slowly approaching me, said with a melancholy smile: 'I am glad to see you, Dr. Peace; is Florence with you?' I answered: 'No; Mrs. Hackett did not like to leave the bed-side of a very sick child of some friend whose name has escaped my memory.' 'And how is May?' he then inquired, with a look of apprehending danger. I said: 'May is spending the vacation with her friends in the country.'—You must know, friend Randall, that I invented this story not to alarm Mr. Hackett, as it might prove fatal to him to relate the facts as they are; and you tell Mrs. Hackett to relate the matter in the same way to Mr. Hackett when we reach New York. Dr. Reed said that Hackett must be kept ignorant of his child's death just as long as possible, or the result might prove serious—perhaps fatal.

Mr. Hackett is under the impression that he was very sick, and was sent into the country in order to get well again; I told him that such was the case, and that he was sent on recommendation of Dr. Dunsmore; this seemed to satisfy him. His mind is somewhat overshadowed at present; but he is in good humor, and very anxious to see his wife and child."

(Here Mrs. H. stops reading for a while and takes handkerchief to wipe off tears; then she proceeds:)

"He asked me whether Florence had changed much during his sickness; I told him that she looks somewhat pale, because she worries herself so much about him.

Don't fail to give this letter to Mrs. Hackett and let her read the contents of it; that will give her the necessary intelligence how to act on our arrival in New York.

We shall start on Wednesday next with the first train in the morning, leaving Green Bay at 6 A. M., and reaching New York Friday afternoon, about 2 o'clock."

(Here Mrs. H. stops to read, turning her head upward as if calculating, and then in a surprised manner exclaims:) Why, that would be to-day—this afternoon! (and then continues reading the letter:)

"Be sure and have Messrs. Little, Sharkey and John present on our arrival at Hackett's home, in order to give Mr. Hackett a most cordial welcome, which, as Dr. Reed says, may have a very beneficial influence upon our patient and friend; I will do my share.

Yours truly,

REV. CHAS. PEACE.

My regards to Mrs. Hackett."

(Mrs. H. sits motionless for a while, staring at the letter; then at once, looking at the clock, says:) It is 11 o'clock already, and I must prepare to receive my husband. Oh, James! Oh, James! I am longing to embrace you (stretching out her arms. Then calling for her servant girl:) Hattie! Hattie!

Hattie (appearing): What do you wish, ma'm?

Mrs. H. Hattie, get everything in the best order—we expect visitors within three hours.

Hattie. Yes, ma'm! (Goes to work to clean furniture and to put everything in order.)

Mrs. H. (gets up from chair and leaves the room while Hattie is busy.)

(Close front flat.)

SCENE 2nd. Front flat showing a street, a Photograph Gallery with a stand of photographs at the entrance being conspicuous.

(Music "Home again," until Dr. Peace and Hackett in center of stage, then music stops.)

Dr. Peace and Hackett (enter slowly, talking together silently until in center of stage. Hackett looks pale and care-worn, his clothes shabby.)

Hackett (looking at the photograph stand, at once calls out aloud): Dr. Peace! Dr. Peace! See here: Florence's picture!

Dr. P. Mr. Hackett, only a few more steps—and you will behold her alive in your arms!

(Piano, or, if not handy, String Quartette ready on stage, and at cue "alive in your arms" plays "Home, Sweet Home," very soft.)

Hackett (on hearing the music, takes off his hat, and raising hands and head upward, says:) That is my daughter, May!—I am coming, my child! I am coming!

(Both disappear on other side of stage.)

SCENE 3rd. Hackett's parlor. Flowers on table.

(Hattie busying herself about the room.)

Dr. P. (behind the scenes, knocking at the door.)

Hattie. Come in!

Dr. P. and Hackett (open the door and enter.)

Hattie (surprised, staggers back, exclaiming): Mr. Hackett, as sure as I live!

Dr. P. Yes, Mr. Hackett; and alive, too.

Hattie (running out excitedly): I must call Mrs. Hackett.

Mrs. Hackett (at once opening the door of an ante-room, flying towards her husband, embracing him and exclaiming): James! James!

Hackett (with strange smile): Yes, Florence; here I am again. (Then both looking in each other's face, when Hackett begins to speak again, with a smile:) My dear wife! You must not send me into the country again when I am sick. Will you promise that?

Mrs. H. Yes, James! I never will be separated from you any more until death.

Hackett. Florence, do you remember that eventful evening,—it was a rainy and stormy night, and I came home wet and cold?

Mrs. H. Yes, James, I remember well: you came home wet and cold, and shivering.

Hackett (with an earnest look, raising his finger slowly): You see, Florence, *that* started it; (shaking his head) oh, I knew it well! (Then very suddenly looking around, he asks impatiently:) But, Florence, where is *May*? Come, send for her, quick!

Mrs. H. Well, James, the children have vacation now, and May begged of me to let her spend the vacation with her friends in the country. You better let her stay, James, until school begins again; don't you think so? (smiling sadly.)

Hackett. Oh, well—yes, let the child stay: *she is happy where she is*.—All right, Florence; all right.

Mrs. H. (turns away, with a down-cast look, at the words "she is happy where she is," and

Dr. P. (exclaims half-aloud): Yes, *she is* happy where she is! (turning away and nodding with his head.)

Randall (behind the scenes, knocking at the door.)

Dr. P. Come in!

Randall (opening and appearing in the door-way.)

Hackett (regaining full mental soundness on seeing Randall, turns back with amazement, putting both hands up to his head and exclaiming): The clouds have disappeared! I am home again! (Then quickly approaches Randall, taking his hands and shaking them in a lively manner, saying:) Mr. Randall, I hope you are not angry with me; I will make everything all right.

Randall. Don't mention that, Mr. Hackett; I only came here to welcome you on your safe return.

Sharkey (behind the scenes, knocking at the door.)

Dr. P. Come in!

Sharkey and **John** (enter.)

Hackett (astonished): Sharkey, the gambling-house keeper?

Sharkey (approaching Hackett smilingly with outstretched hands): Mr. Hackett—not a gambling-house keeper any more! I only came here to welcome you. Don't feel alarmed; it is all right, Mr. Hackett.

John (coming forward): Mr. Hackett, I am so glad to see you home again! (stretching out his hand.)

Hackett (taking John's hand, shaking it rather lively, and saying:) And I believe you—you honest soul! (Then turns about.)

Dr. P., Randall, Sharkey, John and **Mrs. H.** (form a semi-circle around Hackett.)

Hackett (addressing them): Gentlemen! I must confess that I am overwhelmed with joy by the manner you welcome me on my return. (Then turning to Randall:) Mr. Randall, I beg you to excuse me for neglecting my duty towards you. You have every reason to be angry with me; but instead of being angry you surprise me with a hearty welcome. I am in your debt, for which you hold my notes, and my first duty shall be to settle matters at once.

Randall. Mr. Hackett, please don't worry about *that*; this matter is settled *already*.

Hackett (in astonishment): And *who* settled it, allow me to ask?

Randall (pointing to Dr. P.): *The American Clergyman!*

Hackett (with outstretched arms:) My dear Dr. Peace—*explain!*

Dr. P. (shaking head): Mr. Hackett, there is no time for an explanation—some more creditors in the room.

Hackett (turning to Mr. Sharkey): I shall settle affairs with you at my earliest opportunity.

Sharkey. Mr. Hackett, don't trouble yourself about that; it *is* settled to my entire satisfaction.

Hackett (surprised): And by whom, may I ask?

Sharkey (pointing to Dr. P.): By *The American Clergyman!*

Little (at this instance enters quietly from behind and takes position.)

Hackett (turning about as if intending to speak to Dr. P., when

Dr. P. (interrupts him, stepping towards him and holding up his hand): Hold on, friend Hackett—some more creditors around—(pointing at Little.)

Hackett (recognizing Little and approaching him): Mr. Little, I shall settle your bill in a few days.

Little. Mr. Hackett, my bill is settled long before this: I am here to bid you a *hearty welcome!* (shaking hands with Hackett.)

Hackett (amazed): How is this, Mr. Little?

Little (pointing at Dr. P.): Settled by *The American Clergyman!*

Hackett (turning towards Dr. P.): Dr. Peace, I now begin to realize what you have done for me. Through my own fault I had turned my former friends into enemies, ready to give me a most severe and well-deserved punishment; but owing to your good counsel and Christian-like labor I see myself surrounded by a circle of friends, who greet me with a hearty welcome. And this is all *your* work, you faithful clergyman! (Goes up to Dr. P. and shakes hands heartily.)

Dr. P. No, Mr. Hackett! Not as much as that: *I* have but done my duty as a *Christian*; but my success is due to *Him* above us (pointing towards heaven) and these good people here (spreading out both hands and looking around.)

Hackett (taking the center, with Dr. P. on right side and Mrs. H. on left, turning towards the audience): Ladies and gentlemen! I surrender to *The American Clergyman!* PEACE be with you!

(All bow.)

(Music "Home, Sweet Home," till curtain down.)

[End of last act.]





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